

Sus în Poarta Raiului

At the Gates of Heaven Above



A Romanian Christmas carol arranged by

Clive Strutt

ES Verlag



Cover Illustration: A one leu Romanian Christmas stamp issued in November 2013 depicting images and icons belonging to the Brancoveanu Settlements Patriarchal Chapel in the Princess Bălașa Church, Bucharest.

Sus în Poarta Raiului

(‘At the Gates of Heaven Above’)

This traditional Romanian carol tune and text (depicting the Manger during the Nativity of Jesus) was arranged by the English composer Clive Strutt (b. 1942) for an SSAA female choir in 1990. It is provided with a pronunciation guide and an English translation of the Romanian by George K. Evans.

Romanian Christmas Carol

Sus in Poarta Raiului ('At the Gates of Heaven Above')

1. At the gates of Heav'n above,
Apple trees white are blooming sweetly
Blooming for Christ, their dearest love.
2. At the gates of Heav'n above,
Mary the Mother mild is sitting,
Holding the Christ, her dearest love
3. At the gates of Heav'n above,
Her tiny Babe is weeping sadly,
Weeping is Christ, her dearest love.
4. At the gates of Heav'n above,
"Hush, my dear Son, I've gifts to give you,
Gifts for the Christ, my dearest love."
5. At the gates of Heav'n above,
"Two lovely pears and two fair apples,
Presents for Christ, my dearest love."
6. At the gates of Heav'n above,
"Here is the key to Heav'n's portal,
Open to Christ, my dearest love."
7. At the gates of Heav'n above,
"Heavenly King to reign forever,
This is the Christ, my dearest love."

English translation by George K. Evans

Pronunciation Guide to Romanian

- a - like "a" in class, but shorter
- ă - like the English article "a", or "er" in father
- b - like "b" in bed
- c - like "c" in scar
- c (followed by "i") - like "ch" in children
- c (followed by "e") - like "ch" in chair
- c (followed by "hi") - like "k" in skill
- c (followed by "he") - like "k" in skate
- d - like "d" in dog
- e - like "e" in bed
- f - like "f" in father
- g - like "g" in going
- g (followed by "i") - like "g" in gee
- g (followed by "e") - like "g" in gem
- g (followed by "he") - like "g" in guest
- g (followed by "hi") - like "g" in give
- h - like "h" in has
- i - like "ee" in seen, but shorter
(final "i" in unstressed syllables forms no distinct syllable, it just softens the preceding consonant)
- î resembles the vowel represented by "o" in "lesson" or "e" in behind (in affected speech)
- j - like "s" in pleasure
- l - like "l" in leg
- m - like "m" in man
- n - like "n" in nest
- o - like "o" in sport, but shorter
- p - like "p" in spirit
- r - like "r" in road
- s - like "s" in some
- ș - like "sh" in shoe
- t - like "t" in store
- ț - like "ts" in cats
- u - like "oo" in moon, but shorter
- v - like "v" in voice
- x - like "x" in box
- z - like "z" in zero

The diphthongs

- ai - like "y" in by
- au - like "ou" in sound
- ei - like "ai" in rain
- ia - like "ya" in yard
- ie - like "ye" in yellow
- io - like "yaw" in yawn
- iu - like "ew" in few
- ou - like "o" in bone
- oi - like "oi" in oil
- oa - like "wa" in wander

Romanian Christmas Carol

Sus în Poarta Raiului (‘At the Gates of Heaven Above’)

Traditional Romanian tune arranged by **Clive Strutt**

Andante

The musical score is written for a four-part vocal ensemble (Soprano, Alto, Tenor 1, Tenor 2) and piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The piano part features a steady accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The vocal parts enter with the lyrics 'Sus în poar - ta rai - - - u - lui,'. The lyrics are in Romanian and describe the gates of heaven. The score includes three systems of music. The first system contains the first line of the melody and the vocal entry. The second system contains the second line of the melody and the vocal parts. The third system contains the third line of the melody and the vocal parts, ending with a 'segue' instruction. The lyrics are: 'Flo - ri - le dal - - be sunt de mă - ru, -', 'Fi - - - ul plîn - - ge, sta - - - re n-ar - e, -', 'Dou - - - ă me - - re, dou - - - ă pe - re -'.

Sus în poar - ta rai - - - u - lui, _____

Flo - ri - le dal - - be sunt de mă - ru, -
Fi - - - ul plîn - - ge, sta - - - re n-ar - e, -
Dou - - - ă me - - re, dou - - - ă pe - re -

Flo - ri - le dal - - be sunt de mă - ru. } segue
Fi - - - ul plîn - - ge sta - re n-ar.
Dou - - - ă me - - re, dou - ă per.

vv. 2, 4, 6 Sus in poar - - ta rai - - - u - lui,

v. 2 Sa - - - de Mai - - - ca Dom - - - nu - lui
v. 4 Ta - - - ci fiu - - - le, nu mai plin-gé,
v. 6 Si - - - che - i - - - ta de - - - la Rai,

v. 2 Sa - - - de Mai - - - ca Dom - - - nu - lu. D.C. for v. 3
v. 4 Ta - - - ci fiu - - - le nu mai pling. D.C. for v. 5
v. 6 Si - - - che - i - - - ta de - - - la Ra. Segue v. 7

Un pochissimo più lento

v.7 Sus în poar - - ta rai - - - u - lui,

Sa te fa - - ci mai ma - - - re crai

Sa te fa - - ci mai ma - - - re cra.

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